

Security Council (UNSC)

Committee Description



READ TO DISCOVER:

1. What makes the Security Council more powerful than other UN organs?
2. How does the Security Council enforce its resolutions?
3. How are the permanent and elected members of the Security Council different?

In 1946, the Security Council was established as a body of the United Nations. Its purpose was to maintain international peace and security. The Security Council is the only body of the United Nations that is capable of enforcing actions upon countries that might threaten international peace. To do this, the Security Council uses sanctions. One common sanction that the Security Council uses is cutting off the 'problem' country from trading with other nations.

There are five permanent members of the Security Council (P5) and ten rotating members of the Council. Each of the rotating members is elected by the General Assembly for a two-year term.

Each country on the Security Council gets one vote. However, the permanent members have a special power called power. That means that if one of the P5 countries does not agree with a resolution, the P5 country can veto the resolution and it cannot pass.

All members of the Security Council vote according to whether or not the resolution is something that their country would support. In addition to needing the support of all of the P5 nations, Security Council resolutions require a simple majority – at least eight members voting yes – to pass.

Sanctions

The Security Council uses sanctions to punish countries similar to the way parents punish their children for breaking the rules.

How would being grounded or losing your allowance change the way you act? Would it make you less likely to break the rules again?

Types of sanctions used by the Security Council:

- * Diplomatic sanctions
- * Financial sanctions
- * Flight bans
- * Bans on travel for government officials
- * Boycotts of sport or cultural events
- * Trade sanctions
- * Arms embargo

CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

P5: China, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States;

Non-P5: Azerbaijan, Colombia, Germany, Guatemala, India, Morocco, Pakistan, Portugal, South Africa, Togo